



Six easy ways to deal with judging parents

FIRST-TIME PARENTS

ARTICLE

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Feel like you're the victim of mom shaming or mom judging? It's tough being a new mom, let alone if you feel like you're under attack from parental criticism. Here's how to deal with judging parents, family, and friends, while ensuring you show more compassion and stop judging other moms.

- **Did you ask for their advice?**

If you didn't, then you can politely shut them down. You can deter unwanted baby advice by stating what you're doing for your newborn and reinforce that you just want support rather than opinions.

- **Be selective in who you ask baby questions**

If you did ask for advice, however, and don't like their reply then you can't blame them for answering. Think wisely about who you ask certain baby questions. For example, if it's breastfeeding advice, then your close friend who breastfed would be a better option than your sister who bottle-fed.

- **Trust your mom intuition**

Follow your gut and run any advice you're unsure of by your healthcare provider

(HCP). This could be particularly helpful if you feel a family member's advice is old-fashioned or outdated. Use your HCP's recommendation to close down any unwanted opinions. Say "Well, actually, I've checked that with my doctor and they've advised against doing that."

- **Are you misinterpreting their baby advice?**

This is particularly true if you're communicating via text message, over online forums or via social media posts. With a lack of body language, inflection and intonation, things can easily get lost in translation—you could attribute one meaning to an opinion when it was meant as something else. If you're not sure, ask for clarification on what they meant. If in any doubt, leave the conversation alone and confirm it with a face-to-face chat.

- **Is it a classic case of mom shaming?**

Sometimes things aren't lost in translation—shaming mothers is rife online and to be on the receiving end can be very upsetting. Whether the vicious-tongued keyboard warrior is feeling inadequate in their own parenting decisions, experiencing jealousy, anger, or frustration, it's nasty and unnecessary. If you do experience mom shaming online, don't respond. Delete your post to prevent anyone adding to the conversation and try not to read any more comments. As hard as it is, keep these comments in perspective. They're the ones with the issue, not you.

- **Are you judging other parents?**

Finally, take a step back and ask yourself if you are being judgmental? If so, it's time to stop judging other moms or dads. We're all trying to do our best and we will all be caring for our babies slightly differently. It's much healthier to support other parents, whether that's family, friends or new mom group members.